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/For remarks on changing labor standards in Southeast Asia, see Bruno Lasker's foreword to 25: Kurihara, pp. v-viii, category 116, file OA1 Philippines.--Analyst/

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INTRODUCTION

SOUTHEAST ASIA has known its 'empires' of Sri Vijaya and Majapahit, of wide but indefinite sway, and its great kingdoms of the Khmers and of the Thais; but long before the arrival of the Europeans the peninsula of Indo-China and the Malay archipelago had broken up again into isolated fragments. The Spanish, the Dutch, the British, and the French brought large areas under their control and gave them a political and administrative unity they had never known before. Now, under the pressure of new-born nationalisms, the grip of the Western powers is relaxing, and it seems certain that fragmentation will take place all over again. Yet what is happening is no mere repetition of an ancient sequence; nor is it a reversion to a previously existing state.

Evolution, said Herbert Spencer in his celebrated definition, is a change from a relatively indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a relatively definite coherent heterogeneity.[1] He was thinking primarily of biological organisms but he extended the idea by analogy to human society (an operation with many pitfalls). Yet in some striking way his definition does seem to illuminate what is in process in this Southeast Asia area. Side by side with integration goes differentiation; the scission of wholes into parts, and parts into smaller parts. The old states of East, Central, and West Java and of Sumatra—Jambi, Melayu, Minangkabau—and the Malay kingdom of Malacca were separate, isolated entities with only fitful contacts and associations, yet similarities of race, custom, and language gave

[1] *First Principles*, 6th ed. (London, Williams & Norgate, 1900) pp. 351, 367. Spencer adds, 'accompanied by integration of matter and concomitant dissipation of motion', but Dr Joseph Needham in quoting this definition ('Integrative Levels; a Revaluation of the Idea of Progress', pp. 233 ff. of *Time: the Refreshing River*) (London, Allen & Unwin, 1937) says that it is important to note that much of Spencer's argumentation depended on assumptions about energy which antedated the modern statistical interpretation of the second law of thermodynamics. Commenting on the definition as a whole, Dr Needham says: 'We may smile at what we may suppose to be the presumption of such a cosmic formula, but we may find ourselves smiling on the wrong side of our faces if, as is not unlikely, Herbert Spencer has hold of the right end of the stick.'

It is perhaps a tactical error to appeal to Herbert Spencer in a period when his ideas are widely regarded as obsolete; but any theory which appears to make some sense of a situation where others fail to do so cannot be disregarded for any such consideration. Spencer derived his definition from the German biologist, von Baer.

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184 178 them a certain homogeneity:[1] under the Dutch and the British, the Javanese, the Sundanese, the Amboynese, the Achinese, the Peninsular Malays, and some others have become aware of their identities and, while they share the common aim of independence, they have asserted their claims to separate nationhood.

Evidences of scission are patent over all the area, from the Karen and Arakan secession movements to the division between Annam and Cambodia: the higher integrative level to which the area is tending is not so immediately to be seen. Nevertheless, it exists, and is, in the view of the writer, essentially that of Western political, social, economic, and technological ideas. The whole of the Far East, indeed, is asserting its independence of the West in terms of the principles that the West has taught it—self-determination, human rights, democracy, female emancipation, constitutionalism, economic planning, and industrialization, and this is true even when the insurgents appeal to the inverted-Hegelian, Karl Marx, or to the Communism of Mao Tse-tung. It is so in spite of the efforts of these Far Eastern peoples to give such aspirations a local and national appearance. Just as in Rome the new *jus gentium* was eventually hailed as the natural law and Rousseau in France harked back to Man the Noble Savage, so have the Chinese played the same game from the time when Confucius and Mo Tzŭ under traditional appearances introduced ideas that were essentially new. In 1865 Prince Kung relied on historical argument to advocate the introduction of mathematics into the purely literary civil service examinations (mathematics, he said, were a Chinese invention), and in Java the Nationalists interpret each phase of their revolutionary campaign as the realization of the native pro-

[1] Sir Richard Winstedt, in a letter to the writer, classifies the similarities between the peoples of Malaysia as follows:

(*a*) Homogeneity of race modified by different admixture of negrito, Indonesian, and Mongol blood according to the time and place of migration and by geographical isolation in forests.

(*b*) One language family—modified by the same conditions and by acceptance of Hinduism and Islam on coasts.

(*c*) *One identical body of primitive beliefs* brought down from Central Asia where Babylonian influence had introduced cultural features like haruspicy (taking of omens from livers of animals), god-king, respect for the number 7, the incantation, the pyramid, &c.

(*d*) One material culture. (This also was affected by the influences of the Yuës (bringers of bronze), of Chinese of the Chou period (especially in Borneo, *vide* Dyak testiles), Indians, Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, and British.)

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phecy of Chayabaya.[1] But the fact remains that, in spite of the traditionalist imprint on the revolution, what these peoples are aiming at, consciously or unconsciously, is not the recovery of a fabulous age but the achievement for their country and people of a new integration. The recently independent countries of India, Pakistan, Burma, and the Philippines aim at large-scale development of their resources in terms of Western techniques; they insist on industrialization (especially the establishment of heavy industries as a foundation of political power), and they talk of reconstruction and development and of raising the standard of living for the millions of their population. At every international conference, from Lake Success to Havana and Baguio to Lapstone, this is the burden of the refrain, be the discussion on trade, health, currency, or civil aviation. Nor is it purely on the material level that this revolution is planned; it demands at the same time reforms of political and social organization that will bring the Far Eastern nations into an equality with the West. The long-term question is whether it is possible to graft Western technology and institutions on to Far Eastern society without altering its essential nature.

China Proper and her neighbours—Tibet, Annam, Korea—all belong to the Far Eastern Civilization (Main Body) of which Dr Arnold Toynbee says, 'the moment of the breakdown may be equated with the break-up of the T'ang Empire in the last quarter of the ninth century of the Christian Era'.[2] As the 'universal state' of the civilization he gives the Mongol and Manchu empires, and he speaks of the history of the existence of the civilization after its breakdown as 'the survival of Far Eastern Society in its petrified state'. But at the same time he points out that, in general, the breakdown of the civilization is not necessarily followed by a disintegration that runs into dissolution. This would suggest that China is in a condition when her institutions have not the vitality or resilience to meet the challenge of external forces.

Commenting on this passage in the original draft, Mr Tom

[1] Chayabaya is a legend-prophecy amalgamating legends of Siva, Adam, and Allah (*not* Mohammed) in Java into a single national legend of a Javanese millennium and a prophecy of a return to it. It assumed protean forms each of which is invoked as political expediency demands. So far as I am aware, the only exposition of Chayabaya is that of Dr C. C. Berg, of Leyden University, which in 1950 had not yet been published.

[2] A. J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London, Oxford University Press for the Royal Institute of International Affairs, 1934–46) iv. 86–7. vi. 306. D. C. Somervell's abridgement of the work, 1947, p. 361.

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184 178 Harrisson (whose approach is primarily that of the anthropologist) remarks that it 'always seems dangerous to equate the culture of the ruling dynasty with the whole of a huge country', and adds that some areas of China have, perhaps, never had a culture at all in the sense intended by Professor Toynbee and they cannot be said to have decayed in the least, but rather to have advanced in historical times. The answer to that is that what is referred to here is a single, integrated culture codified in the ancient canonical writings, permeating the whole of the Chinese people who emigrate overseas (the aboriginal tribes of China do not come within our purview), and expressed down to this very day in the family institutions and moral system of the Chinese both in China and overseas. 'China' in the present text is, however, nearly always the Mangi of Marco Polo, namely South China, and only part of it at that, namely the province of Fukien and Kwangtung and parts of Kwangsi and Kiangsi, and not the Cathay, or North China, of the Venetian traveller. The culture, none the less, is that of China as a whole, and the languages (especially Cantonese) are nearer than those of the north to the ancient language of China.

The reader may feel a protest against the affirmation of the continued advance of the West rising in his mind when he recollects the recent strong, often violent, reaction against the West that is so apparent in Asia—the retreat from the English language as a medium of instruction in post-liberation India, or the cry of 'the West must go' in Burma. The answer is that these incidents are partly the normal 'die-hard' gestures of resistance to change, and partly the expressions of resentment of economic control or political pressure by Europeans as persons, politicians, administrators, or companies. For the revolution set in train by Western ideas is now directed, as we have said at the outset, against Western individuals and nations. The West itself is in a state of flux, shaping its industrial civilization to the standards set largely by America, but challenged by Russia, and the Far East flows willy-nilly with the contemporary current. It is indeed a case, in a special sense, of 'Westward the course of empire takes its way'.[1]

This triumph of the West, however, is affirmed here in no spirit of exultation but with deep anxiety. As there rise up before us the

[1] 'Of all the civilizations, dead or living, of which we know our own is the only one which is possibly still not in decline.' A. J. Toynbee, *The Prospects of Western Civilization* (New York, Columbia University Press, 1949) p. 5.

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symbols of our age—the Petrol Pump, the Pylon, the 'Dust Bowl', the Automat, 'Mass Media', the chilling Neon Sign—there is a shrinking of the soul and a poignant yearning for the glory that was Angkor and the grandeur that was Chang An. Yet it is in its effective organs—the Assembly Line, the Tennessee Valley Authority, 'E.R.P.', and the Research Stations—that our robotic civilization throbs; not in the cult of lost causes or impossible loyalties, nor in our academies, our museums, nor our half-empty cathedrals.

At least it is the material aspects of our civilization which appeal to the awakening consciousness of the peoples of the Far East. Whether they will adopt capitalist, socialist, or communist social organization as a means of securing the coveted gadgets of the West that mean a higher standard of living is another matter. Dr Joseph Needham, for example, says that there is no reason to think that the Chinese will not make as convinced socialists as anybody else, but that there are certain directions in which Chinese thinking might have a profound effect upon the nature of the society of the future, perhaps in the matter of juristic security of the individual, and in the forms which the numinous will take in that society. However, there is far less reason to believe that they will adopt democracy, and Communism, being dictatorial, they will probably find more natural and acceptable than democratic socialism.[1]

This survey is of the Chinese in the regions of Tropical Asia, and often in the course of our narrative the question already posed as to the power of this and other peoples to absorb Western ideas without changing their own essential nature will arise either tacitly or explicitly. In other words, can the basic institutions of these peoples meet the impact of Western industrial civilization or of Marxism without disintegrating?

Chinese civilization is based on ancestor worship, the family system, on Confucianism (which incorporates these principles), and on Buddhism and Taoism. The staunchest supporters of these religions could scarcely deny that Buddhism and Taoism as moral forces are in complete decay in China and have been so for a very long time.[2] Whatever their surviving effectiveness they cannot by

[1] J. Needham, 'Confucianism after 2000 Years', in the *Manchester Guardian*, 29 August 1949.

[2] To realize the formalism and religiosity into which Buddhism had declined by last century, one has only to observe the *chü-jen* (M.A.) of the late Ch'ing dynasty who, to prepare his character for office, suddenly takes an interest in practical benevolence. He ostentatiously burns incense and gives alms. If he sees

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themselves form a pillar of the Chinese social system. This leaves only the family system as a core of resistance, for much of Confucianism, too, has fallen into formalism or, more often, into disuse. While political structures of the wider integration (except, so far, Communism) have in post-revolutionary China shown no great effectiveness, the clan and the family have demonstrated a remarkable resistance to change. Yet even these institutions have undergone considerable modification, especially in south China under the influence of the emigrant communities to the Nanyang.[1] Moreover, the experience abroad of Chinese women has made them discontented with many features of the old marriage system. But the influence of example and sometimes of education, which is operating in Southeast Asia, is of small effect as compared with the impact of militant Communism on these institutions in the Communist areas of China—and before long the Communists may overrun the whole of that vast country.[2] All the evidence from Communist China goes to suggest that the age-old 'familism' of the country is not able in this crisis to withstand the force of Communist propaganda. Take, for instance, what an English university lecturer and his wife from Peking, who escaped from the Japanese in 1941 and spent over two years among the Communists, have to say:

> Most spectacular of all has been the success of the Women's Mass Association. Before 1937 the social status of women in country districts of North China, like the rest of the country, was controlled by patriarchal familism. . . . The liberation movement spread like a forest fire through the villages.[3]

Evidence on every hand confirms this experience: the case of hard-working, filial peasant girls carried off to be 'indoctrinated' at Communist schools and returning a year later with a militant sense

a fish in the markets floundering on the hooks, he pays its price and restores it to its native element; he picks struggling ants out of a rivulet made by a recent shower, distributes moral tracts, or, better still, rescues chance bits of paper inscribed with the sacred written character (be it only a discarded bill) from being trodden in the mire of the streets. W. A. P. Martin, *Lore of Cathay* (London, 1901) p. 317. Analogies could, alas, be found in our Christian civilization.

[1] This word, which will recur often in this survey, means literally 'Southern Ocean', but is applied to the whole area of Southeast Asia and even to Australia and other territories to the southward where Chinese emigrants are located.

[2] Written in February 1949.

[3] Claire and William Band, *Dragon Fangs* (London, Allen & Unwin, 1948) p. 128.

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of equality with their fathers and brothers and refusing to accept a system they had never questioned a year before. On hearing these things we might even inquire whether the intense conservatism of China is not rather the *vis inertiae* of dead or moribund forms and not a force for the renewal and remoulding of living tissue.

Yet many Chinese and several leading European authorities adhere to the belief that the present crisis may bring forth a Confucian revival. Sir John Pratt, for example, tells us that many of the best elements in the Kuomintang, together with the intellectual, industrial, and other leaders, may link with the Communists in finding a way for saving the country from destruction; 'they cling [he says] to the hope that the Confucian harmony, which is still the basis of Chinese thought, would soften the worst features of the Marxist-Leninist ideology, and that communism in becoming Chinese would become more human'.[1]

'Confucian harmony', perhaps, will have its softening influence, but can there by any large-scale revival of the teaching of the Sage as a positive movement? There have been attempts to bring this about, but none has succeeded. The Four Books (the Analects, the Great Learning, the Doctrine of the Mean, and Mencius), which contain the body of the Confucian doctrine and which were the substance of the traditional curriculum, are not taught in the modern educational system and have not been taught for many years. How then is this teaching to be transmitted? Certainly if the Communists can work on the women of China in the mass the whole face of Chinese society will be changed. In such circumstances a Confucian revival would be unthinkable.

Much of what has been said above may sound controversial, but it all turns on the meaning of words. Sir George Sansom in his new book, *The Western World and Japan*, says, 'In a limited sense the Japanese came under Western influence, but . . . what was finally adopted was, if Western in shape, thoroughly Japanese in colour and substance.' If we try to apply this to China in accordance with our own definitions, it is the shape and the colour which remain Chinese while the substance becomes more and more 'Western'. After all, modern capitalistic England has very little in common with feudal England, yet the shape and the colour of the two ages have strong similarities. What matters politically is

[1] 'The Chinese Cauldron', *Everybody's Weekly* (29 January 1949).

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that the Chinese Communists consider the present revolution as an indigenous movement—*not* Russian-inspired—and at the same time they have no difficulty in regarding themselves as orthodox Marxists.

In the area covered by this study the main trend of European colonial policy has been in the direction of encouraging the forces of native conservatism to resist innovation. European colonial administrators frequently evince an affection for feudal institutions, a reverence for Mohammedanism, a respect for *adat* law and for princely succession and privilege in excess of that of the native aristocracies themselves. It happens sometimes that existing institutions which had been crystallized by European intervention are sustained only by foreign authority, and in extreme cases, if the sustentation ceased, would dissolve into nothingness as in Poe's *Case of Dr. Valdemar* when death had occurred but dissolution was temporarily suspended by a hypnotic trance.[1]

So much discussion of the general considerations governing the area of our inquiry has been necessary to give a background for our survey of the Chinese in Southeast Asia. But before proceeding to give an outline of our subject, there is one further observation we should make. This is that the survival of particular forms of organization is one thing; the survival of the race or community is another. It is likely that whatever happens the Chinese, both at home and overseas, will retain considerable social and cultural coherence, besides a strong sense of being 'Chinese'. It is his patience in adversity, his adaptability, his determination, his good humour, and his resilience that makes the individual Chinese, male or female, such an admirable biological specimen, and it is his social qualities (given proper treatment) that make him such a valuable unit in this Southeast Asian society. At the present time the Chinese of the Nanyang are in a dilemma, but this work should show that it is their superiority in resource, ability, and industry to the people among whom they live rather than their vicious propensities that makes them constitute a 'problem'.

The cartoon for our picture stands before us in bold charcoal

[1] Poe's description was more vivid but perhaps a little too strong for the present context. British policy in British India favoured 'modernization (e.g. Dalhousie's policy) while in the Indian States it generally favoured 'traditionalism'.

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CHAPTER IV

SPECIAL ASPECTS OF CHINESE SOCIETY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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MOST readers of this survey will be acquainted, at least in a general way, with the problems of China itself and with the direction in which the people of that country have moved in the last fifty years. What will be attempted in this chapter will be to illustrate the way in which the Chinese of Southeast Asia have in some respects deviated from the central pattern under the influence of local conditions. We shall select for this purpose the special aspects of the family, marriage, religion, and education, with some remarks on the opium question. As regards politics, Chapter XXXI, dealing with Chinese political organization in Malaya, brings out the developments which are typical of the area as a whole, and to this the reader is referred should he wish to gain a general impression of the matter before proceeding to the separate country studies.

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The Family. An excellent starting-point for our chapter is the work of Dr Ta Chen, who, in 1934 and 1935 was in charge of a group of investigators studying the emigrant communities in eastern Kwangtung and southern Fukien under the auspices of the International Research Committee of the Institute of Pacific Relations.[1] The area selected for study was a region from which many of the emigrants to the Nanyang originated and where their families mostly live. It is on the sea coast of the two southernmost maritime provinces and consists of ten *hsien* (counties). Roughly speaking, it includes a long strip of territory beginning at Chao An (formerly Chao Chou), passing through Swatow on the Kwangtung border, and through Amoy, and ending at Chuan Chou (Ch'üan-chow) in Fukien. It is an area of a little less than 5,000 square miles with a total population of a little over 4·6 million in 1935.[2]

[1] Ta Chen (the name is properly Chen Ta, Chen being the surname, and it is thus given in some library catalogues), *Emigrant Communities in South China: a Study of Overseas Migration and its Influence on Standards of Living and Social Change*, English ed. by Bruno Lasker (New York, Institute of Pacific Relations, 1940).

[2] Though all the *hsien* have sent emigrants to the Nanyang the area does not constitute the sole source of emigration to the south, even from these two provinces. For example, Mei Hsien and vicinity, the principal home of the Hakkas and the largest source of Hakka emigration, is not included in this area.

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Dr Ta Chen gives a table (p. 83) of the sources of income of 100 emigrant families from October 1934 to September 1935 which shows that the average monthly remittance per family was 81·4 per cent. of the total income, ranging between 75·5 per cent. for incomes below $20 per mensem, and 84·1 per cent. for incomes between $125 and $250. This enabled the emigrant families to maintain a much higher standard of living as a whole than those families which had no source of assistance from abroad.

Apart from the purely economic effects of overseas migration upon these communities of east Kwangtung and south Fukien, there is evidence to show that intercourse with Southeast Asia was having a considerable modifying effect on the social institutions, religion, and general outlook both of the emigrants themselves and of the families in China whence they came and to which usually they eventually returned.

In China the social unit has immemorially been the family, and it remains so except to the extent that it has broken down in Communist areas under the influence of Communist ideology. The system which has as its object the perpetuation of the family tree, to a considerable extent subordinates the individual to its needs. But in these emigrant communities in China and in the Nanyang itself, it has had to undergo a great deal of modification to survive. Where resources permit, a dual family system has grown up, whereby one section lives in China and the other in the Nanyang. This dual, or joint family, takes a number of forms which may vary; in the case of a well-off family (to give an example) the head of the family aged 61 lives in Siam, his wife (aged 58) lives in the ancestral village in China and is the acting head of the family, the first concubine (56) is a Siamese and lives in Siam, the second concubine (44) is in the village, and the third and fourth concubines (both Chinese, aged 30 and 19) are also in Siam, and the children of the unions are, except for the son by the wife who is with his father in Siam, all with their mothers, either in Siam or in China. An example of a middle-class family is of a father aged 77 in the village, his son aged 50, the head of the family, in Singapore, and his wife (the acting head of the family) in the village in China. The head of the family had his concubine in Singapore, and the offspring, either of the head of the family or his brothers (who belong to the family) were either in Singapore or at home. A third case of a lower-class family is a more simple pattern with the head of

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the family in Siam, his wife (acting head of the family) in the village in China, and most of the children of the marriage in China.

Such arrangements obviously call for careful financing. The emigrant abroad, after deducting what he needs to meet his expenses, usually remits his savings periodically to his home in China for the support of the family there and to meet extraordinary expenses, such as of a marriage in the family. At the same time the family home in China is a kind of insurance for the emigrant, for he can always return there if he is unemployed.

The influence of the emigrant on the age-old ideas and customs of his home village has been great. If he has had much foreign experience he almost invariably condemns the traditional family arrangement. In the words of a returned tin-miner from Malaya:[1]

> The joint family is an obnoxious social institution. When a member of such a family earns money he is obliged to support all the rest of it and to carry a heavy economic burden. I have had a very bitter experience and always felt that I am virtually the slave of my family. They are of no help to me at all.

A critical attitude towards the family and marriage systems is very general among returned emigrants. They remark that living in the modern world is a complicated affair, and that the joint family is no longer practicable. Many of them felt (in 1935) that an early disintegration of the family in south China was inevitable. Moreover, many of the emigrants have seen what marriage may mean in modern Western life when love and courtship enter into the marriage preliminaries and the union is (or should be) based on affection. An emigrant inevitably contrasts this with the Chinese system wherein the husband and wife are often unknown to one another before marriage. Stubborn and resistant as the traditional family system is, there is evidence from all over the Nanyang that as regards marriage the traditional procedure is in retreat before the modern marriage, and that the joint family system is being strained in some cases almost to breaking-point. Again, in the Nanyang itself, the increased mobility of members of the family is a force threatening to loosen its bonds.

In spite of these tendencies, marriage custom among the Chinese in the Nanyang at the time of the outbreak of the war between Japan and the Allies in 1941 generally followed Chinese traditional

[1] Ta Chen, op. cit. p. 142.

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custom.[1] All this ceremonial was very expensive and involved the family in a burden of debt.

One result of the Revolution in China was to initiate a changing attitude towards family institutions. Books IV and V of the Civil Code of the Republic of China deal with the family and succession. The law was promulgated on 26 December 1930 and came into force on 5 May 1931. Polygamy was abolished, and though concubinage in many cases continued, the concubine was now a mistress without legal rights.[2] According to the new law the parties to a marriage were empowered to make the marriage agreement of their own accord, the sole restrictions being that a man who had not completed his eighteenth year and a woman not yet sixteen must obtain the consent of their parents or guardian. No registration of marriage was provided for.

In the Straits Settlements a Chinese Marriage Committee, appointed in 1925 by the Government, recommended that there should be registration for both new- and old-style marriages.[3] The old-style marriage would be valid if the marriage ceremony was carried out with all the essentials required by custom in the district of China from which the bridegroom and bride or their ancestors came, or by such modified custom as was observed by the Chinese residents of the Colony for that district. The committee found it impossible to submit proposals for legislation as to what forms or ceremonies should constitute marriage, because the evidence disclosed the fact that there were no essentials for Chinese marriages in the old style common to all the districts of south China or to the locally born descendants of emigrants from these districts, while the new style of marriage did not require any particular form.

The evidence taken by the committee revealed a practically unanimous opposition among Chinese residents in the Straits Settlements to any divorce legislation.[4]

[1] For a description of these customs see G.B., Colonial Office, *Report of the Commission on Mui Tsai in Hong Kong and Malaya*, Colonial no. 125 (1937), and Purcell, *The Chinese in Malaya*, pp. 148–50.

[2] cf. M. H. van der Valk, 'The New Chinese Criminal Code', *Pacific Affairs* (1936) pp. 76, 77. Under the new Chinese Criminal Code which became operative in July 1935 husband and wife are equally liable to a year's imprisonment for committing adultery, and moreover the person with whom the adultery is committed incurs the same punishment. Complaint can be laid only by the injured spouse.

[3] *Chinese Marriage Committee*, Singapore 1926.

[4] The position in the Federated Malay States, however, was temporarily revolutionized by the Secretary for Chinese Affairs Enactment which was passed

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871 *Education.* It was only by dint of continual defeat at the hands of foreign Powers that China realized that her traditional literary system of education, which had endured for over a thousand years, did not fit her to withstand the assaults of her enemies. At long last she decided to adopt an educational system on modern lines. The greatest obstacle in doing this was the classical language. The literary language in which all education was conducted had become completely divorced from the spoken language, and it needed many years of study before a student could obtain anything like command of it. Whilst it remained, a democratic system of education was out of the question.[1] So it was that in 1917 there occurred the most revolutionary happening in the history of Chinese education, the initiation of the *pai hua* movement.[2]

Pai hua, or written vernacular, had existed in China for centuries. Most popular novels were written in it, but it had never obtained the recognition of the literati. Corresponding, as it did, to the spoken language, it was much more easily learnt than *wen li*, the Chinese literary language, though it was clumsier and more discursive. So when Dr Hu Shih maintained that the literary language should be abolished in schools and that *pai hua* should be elevated to the rank of a literary medium, the proposal was considered as threatening the very foundations of Chinese culture. But the movement obtained powerful political support and in January 1920, the Minister of Education ordered that the spoken language should be used in the teaching of Chinese in primary schools. The form of *pai hua* approved for this purpose became known as *Kuo Yü*, or the National Language.[3]

in 1899 and repealed in 1932. By this enactment the Secretary for Chinese Affairs had powers to decide the custody and guardianship of women and children, and to order divorce, separation, adoption, and betrothal.

[1] Dr W. A. P. Martin estimated about 1880 that the proportion of Chinese who could read and understand what they read was about one in twenty.

[2] For a full exposition of the subject see Victor Purcell, *Problems of Chinese Education* (London, Kegan Paul, 1936).

[3] See Hu Shih, *The Chinese Renaissance*. The Haskell Lectures, 1933 (University of Chicago Press, 1934).

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C 668 S 167 178 668 641 this was a policy which the British neglected to pursue with any conviction, and the post-war experiment in this direction, the Malayan Union, was abandoned at the first sign of opposition. Unless a true 'Malayan citizenship' can be made effective, the ideal of a Malayan nation forming, as it were, a buffer State between China, Indonesia, and India, with bonds with all three but belonging to none, will remain a phantom.

S 565 554 641 In the present crisis the great and deplorable weakness of the Chinese in Southeast Asia is the absence of effective leadership (and the few notable exceptions to this generalization do not affect its truth). This is due in large part to the fact that there has grown up no Chinese middle class of sufficient proportions to provide disinterested, well-educated, and competent individuals in the numbers needed to guide their community through the reefs of politics towards a safe anchorage. The business leaders are so busy making money (or endeavouring not to lose it) that few of them have time to devote to public affairs even if they had the will and the knowledge. In Malaya, at least, the Indian stands in sharp contrast to the Chinese, and in Singapore Indian representation on the various bodies is vastly greater in proportion to their numbers than is the case with the much more numerous Chinese. This is not explicable solely by Chinese political pique but must be due largely to the training in politics and administration the Indians received in their own country during the British Raj. In Malaya, Indonesia, and Indochina the British, Dutch, and French have neglected to afford opportunities for the Chinese residents to acquire a knowledge of affairs. The penalty of this neglect is that now, when European control is loosening, the mass of the Chinese have few leaders to take control and to consolidate their community in face of the Communist advance. The lack of experience and education determines also the quality of the Communist leadership in these regions. Among the Malayan Communists are no Mao Tse-tungs or Chou En-lais and scarcely any individuals with more than the rudimentary mis-education obtainable in Chinese vernacular schools. The result is that the old professional bandit (always a feature of Malaya's jungle-fringe) is more prominent than he would otherwise be, and terrorism is unmitigated by constructive politics. Is it, therefore, strange that in 1949 the majority of Nanyang Chinese were 'sitting on the fence' awaiting the final upshot in China and its repercussions overseas? In such

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circumstances a handful of Chinese Communists, many of them uneducated youths with a strong professional bandit element as just mentioned, had almost complete freedom of action through the time-honoured weapons of intimidation and extortion. With this insidious pressure, and with little support or sympathy from the European Powers or the native peoples, the Chinese of Southeast Asia were indeed in a dilemma.

With the advent of militant Communism came a final complication to the lives of the overseas Chinese. The appeal of the Communists is to the idea of a society horizontally but not vertically divided—that is, divided into classes, but with a proletariat which cuts across racial and community divisions. So far this appeal had been listened to by only a small minority of the Chinese, and with the Malays and other races it has been an almost complete failure. But let no one underestimate the attraction it might have for the masses of Southeast Asia if they were simultaneously convinced of the sincerity of the Communist professions and of the bankruptcy of 'bourgeois' promises.

The only way to stem the advance of Communism in Southeast Asia is to raise the standard of living. The irony of such a course for the colonial Powers is that in promoting a rise in the standard of living they are hastening their own departure. Improved material welfare stimulates political awareness. Whereas in the grand old days of their trading companies they could lord it over a province with a garrison of a score of soldiers, to-day with armies of a hundred thousand they remain only on sufferance. It is of no use, however, their elder statesmen and administrators of a bygone age urging the Governments to 'go slow'. The idea of representative government came from the West, but the rate of approach to it is largely fixed by the peoples themselves. All that the colonial Powers can aim at is to leave their ex-dependencies able to decide their own future and not at the mercy of new imperialisms.

We take leave of the Chinese in Southeast Asia at a time when they are undergoing one of the greatest trials in their history. The whole of the Far East is disintegrating as it moves towards a new and mysterious synthesis. These emigrants belong to a race which for at least one hundred and twenty generations, through the rise, flowering, decline, and petrifaction of the Chinese culture, has preserved a unified attitude of mind towards life and reality, and they look towards their parent civilization and see it once more in

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a state of flux. This is no new phenomenon: it has happened a score of times in Chinese history and each time China has found a new level of stability. It was (it has been said) like a cube; overthrown by civil convulsion it falls flat on another side and is once more the same solid mass. Will it be so again? This is the moot question. The forces causing the upheaval are more powerful and destructive than ever before. They are the same forces which have shaped and are shaping the materialistic, sceptic, technological method of life that we in the West know as civilization. Can China receive the full impact of these forces and remain essentially the China of all time? The event alone will answer this, though it may be nearer than we imagine in the ever-accelerating tempo of change.

These are long-term, philosophical questions. The more immediate practical question for the Chinese of Southeast Asia, for the peoples among whom they live, and for the rest of the world that has contact or dealings with this area (which is, in effect, everyone), is how this vital and active people will fit into the dispensation of to-morrow. It is a question that every diplomat, administrator, merchant, or student of international affairs should tax his mind to answer in advance of the event, and for this task a necessary preliminary is some knowledge of the nature, the development, and the aspirations of the overseas Chinese. This is what this work, in small compass, attempts to supply.

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A visit to Southeast Asia during the third quarter of 1950 after an absence of nearly three years brought home to the writer the accelerated tempo of the change that the countries were undergoing, and, in particular, the dominant role which the politics of China were playing therein. As a tailpiece to this survey he has recorded the impressions of his visit, bringing the account as nearly up to date as the exigencies of publishing would allow. The observations are set down in the order in which the countries were visited.

In his many discussions with statesmen, diplomats, officials, business men, and others in these Southeast Asian countries, the writer became aware of a considerable disagreement among them regarding the number of Chinese in the area. There was, in the case of Siam and Indochina in particular, no figure that was generally accepted. The definition of 'Chinese' was an initial difficulty (as it has so often been in the course of this survey) for many Chinese appeared to possess a dual racial character, discarding one aspect and assuming the other as circumstances suggested.[1] It seemed also that that clandestine immigration into Siam, Indochina, and the Philippines and (perhaps) Indonesia within the last two or three years, had been very considerable, for during this period the immigration laws had been greatly tightened. The writer was compelled, therefore, to revise the estimates he had made in the demographic chapters of the survey to suit the probable facts of 1950 and to adopt a total not very far short of 10 million ethnic Chinese for the whole of Southeast Asia. This estimate, however, does not materially alter the ratio of Chinese to other races in the area and has no very important bearing on the general political and economic considerations which have been described in the text.

Burma. In July 1950 the Chinese Nationalist ambassador had left Burma, and one other official of the embassy had also gone away, but the remainder of both the embassy and consular staff had agreed to serve under the People's Government of China which was now recognized by the Burmese Government. Two of the staff had already been summoned to Peking for indoctrination. The new ambassador, Dr Yu, was expected to arrive in Rangoon in August. In the meantime the staffs were not being paid and the only income available was that derived from the sale of (Nationalist) passports.

At this time an incident in the Burmese Shan State of Keng-tung near Siam was the subject of a number of rumours. A force of Chinese

[1] Thus in Siam, the President of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, of very obvious Chinese race or extraction but with a Thai name, denounced vehemently the tactics of business men of acknowledged Chinese nationality in their dealings with the Thais.

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that about one-third of its prewar estate area was being tapped in 1947, representing two-thirds of the area tappable.

In the food crops, surplus margins were more slowly restored. Exports of Southeast Asia rice totalled about a million tons during 1946, as against a combined export of 5.7 million tons annually for 1936–40. The drop in production of this staple was greatest in the case of Burma because there the dislocation by war had been greatest, but by the 1946–47 season, about two-thirds of Lower Burma rice acreages were back in cultivation, as against half in 1945–46. In Cochinchina over 70 per cent of the rice area was being cultivated in 1946–47. Siam which was untouched by military campaigns reported 10.6 million acres under cultivation in rice for 1946–47 (22 per cent more than 1939–40)—the only territory to show a substantial increase of rice acreage in the immediate postwar years.

A postwar feature has been the general decline in rice yields, mostly an effect of loss of draught cattle, though to report low yields was a convenient cover for black market sales. The consequence of lost production in local food was felt more in places like Malaya which has specialised in non-food commercial agriculture, than in any other territories of Asia, which customarily needed to import only a small margin and not the majority of their rice. For the Philippines in 1947, the United Nations reported that *per capita* consumption of rice was actually higher than in 1939 by about 5 per cent.

Since labour shortage has been prominent as a factor operating against postwar commercial agriculture, the subsistence farmer and the diversified smallholder have assumed far greater significance than before. Over 55 per cent of Malaya's rubber production for 1946 was from smallholders, a proportion which had been as much as 85 per cent in the early months of that year, yet fell to 45 per cent in 1950 (cf. 39 per cent in 1940).

The vegetable oils soon came back into production and by early 1947 monthly production in Southeast Asia was not far short of 1941 production and now exceeds it.

The general lowering of food acreages and of yields, combined with the enforced reversion to subsistence agricultural forms, has a special significance for Southeast Asia food supplies over the next few years, because the restricted food supply comes at a time when population is rapidly increasing, at the rate of about 20

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million people per decade, and when social policy is for raising the standard of nutrition. These two factors mean that the pre-war rice exporters are on every score likely to continue to have less margin for export. How the communities will meet this basic difficulty of supply in their staple food is not clear ; mechanisation is scarcely a solution, yields are very difficult to raise on a large scale, and there are few unused areas of high potential for rice farming, yet unless improvement is reached the labour force is unlikely to remain in non-food producing territories, rice may be for such areas a luxury and not a cheap staple, and the costs of any production must remain high. Influences of this sort in a region where average productive skill is low and slow, may cause it to become one of the world's most costly producer zones and hasten in Europe and the United States the exploitation of substitute commodities which lend themselves to mechanisation more than is the case with typical Southeast Asia agricultural products. It may happen that rapid peopling of Sumatra, Borneo and New Guinea deltas may take place, much as the continental deltas of Southeast Asia were quickly filled with people over the last 50 years; the fact that there has been previous reluctance to go to these places is no guarantee that there will be continued reluctance. Southeast Asia may even become a consumer for rice cultivated in the new areas of South America and Northern Australia. Perhaps some startling innovation of crop or technique will change the otherwise rather gloomy picture, much as the opening up of Canadian, Australian and Argentine wheatlands speedily altered the similarly gloomy outlook for European wheat-eating peoples at the end of last century.

Directions in these trends of Southeast Asia agriculture are difficult to determine because there are major stratifications of local society both vertically and horizontally which are in process of readjustment, aggravated by currency confusion and widespread ignorance. These will take time to reach an equilibrium and during that period subsistence farming and its nationalist corollary, territorial self-sufficiency, are likely to be strong influences working against a great revival of commercial activity of any sort, with the result that Southeast Asia may not continue indefinitely in its prewar role of one of the world's major sources of supply. Against this must be weighed the proved ability of tropical agriculture to respond quickly to new impetuses.

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Further to complicate the historic geography was the fact that the literary people, the monks and religious men, were Indian or Indian-minded for long periods, disinterested in mundane records, and following the custom, still evident among many Southeast Asia people today, of avoiding personal names, so that anonymity, obscurity and confused nomenclature veil the past even in such records as do exist. Many experiments in writing styles were developed among these isolated and complex peoples and often inscriptions made in them cannot be translated today. Because of the dispersal tendencies within the territories themselves and the lack of focus to the region as a whole, no great depositories of learning were established in Southeast Asia to gather and conserve the record of its past.

Population Changes

Broadly speaking, the region has been until recently one of very thin population and large patches of it still contain populations of remarkably low density. Direct evidence of densities are scanty for periods farther back than this century, yet it seems probable that the whole of Southeast Asia in 1800 contained only about ten million people, when the region was probably as thinly peopled in its most attractive areas as Upper Burma and Upper Siam, the least attractive and developed areas, are today; Malaya then contained about a quarter million people, Java about four million, Burma probably less than two million. It was, even at the end of the 18th century, a zone of labour shortage and the objective of the local princelings of the times was to get hands, the basic power resource of their time, the one way of securing a small surplus from their fundamentally subsistent territories. Outsiders were not greatly attracted to Southeast Asia itself, as apart from the routes through it. To Spain its old colony, the Philippines, was no great asset and more related to Mexico than to Spain, remote and ready to drop from the Spanish orbit during the 19th century. To Holland, its colony in Java was a company venture that yielded little direct profit for many years and was at times on the verge of bankruptcy.

But the last 150 years brought tremendous changes in population. First, on the heels of the Industrial Revolution in Europe, came a revival and an expanded volume of trade between the Indian Ocean and the Far East, a stream which threaded the seaways o

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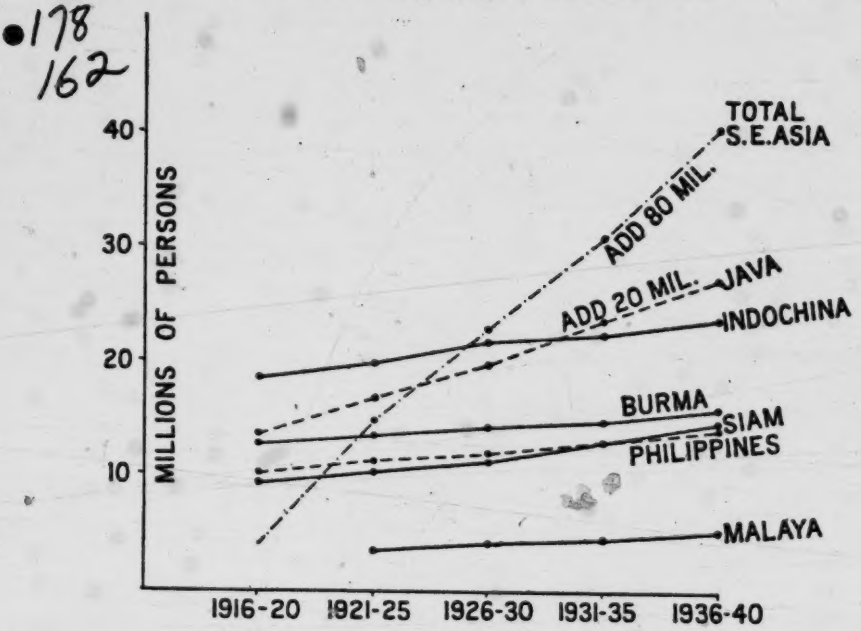

FIG. 115.—Population Expansions of Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia, diffusing new conceptions as it passed, re-establishing trading centres, drawing out the produce of Southeast Asia people and stimulating development of Southeast Asia as a source of trade rather than a passage for traders. It has been a century and a half of tremendous population increases, causing people to swarm upon the more fertile areas, upon deltas and volcanic cones where people had not clustered before. In these choice areas, the new deltas and the newer ejecta, the bulk of the great population increase has concentrated, so that upon them live teeming multitudes in limited zones separated by stretches of forest-covered space scarcely more populated now than they were several centuries ago. By the quinquennium 1916-20, the total population of Southeast Asia had become 84 million, by 1936-40, 120 million, and in this present quinquennium (1946-50) it is nearly 145 million. The increases, while general, have not been even (Fig. 115). Over the present century, of the political units, Java has been increasing very much faster than any other, and Siam has since 1911 so increased that its population exceeded that of the Philippines by 1933 and by now exceeds also that of Burma.

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SOUTHEAST ASIA NUTRITION DENSITIES
(Average number of persons per rice-acre per annum)

Quinquennium	*Burma*	*Indo-china*	*Siam*	*Java and Madoera*	*Philip-pines*	*Malaya*
1916–20	1.23	1.75	1.66	4.12	3.13	—
1921–25	1.19	1.67	1.57	4.27	2.67	5.61
1926–30	1.14	1.61	1.57	4.50	2.69	6.13
1931–35	1.19	1.64	1.63	4.60	2.76	6.42
1936–40	1.25	1.63	1.74	4.96	2.79	7.02
1946–50	2.0	2.1	1.6	5.9	3.9	7.2

Because population and the net production of food have increased *pari passu*, it is important to examine the "nutrition density" (persons per acre under rice) since the surplus for export depends on low internal consumption of the Southeast Asia staple and high internal production. The countries of Southeast Asia pre-war showed considerable differences in nutrition density, from Malaya (the plantation-mining specialist) with 7.2 persons per rice-acre, to Siam (the rice-surplus specialist) with 1.6. Malaya, Java and the Philippines had nutrition densities much higher than the rest of neighbouring countries and in the case of Malaya and Java the nutrition density had been steadily rising, whereas in Burma, Indochina and Siam it was fairly static. Over the same period, the domestic consumption of rice per person sharply dropped (by 20-25 per cent) in Burma, Siam and Java and rose about 10 per cent in Indochina, Philippines and Malaya. The postwar figures available show considerable increases of nutrition density everywhere except in Siam, yet these were changes of degree, not of pattern.

Changing Internal Emphasis

Today the very crowded places are firstly, Middle and North Java, Lower Siam and the Red River Delta, where densities of over 1,500 people per square mile occur, with secondary crowdings in Lower Burma, the Lower Mekong, Central Luzon and the Visayas. These concentrations of people are pre-eminently in agricultural areas (Fig. 116), and they are in fact largely made possible by exceptional soil qualities within an area whose general soil fertility is low. These crowded areas have taken part in a commercialisation of local agriculture and their subsequent history has been firstly a

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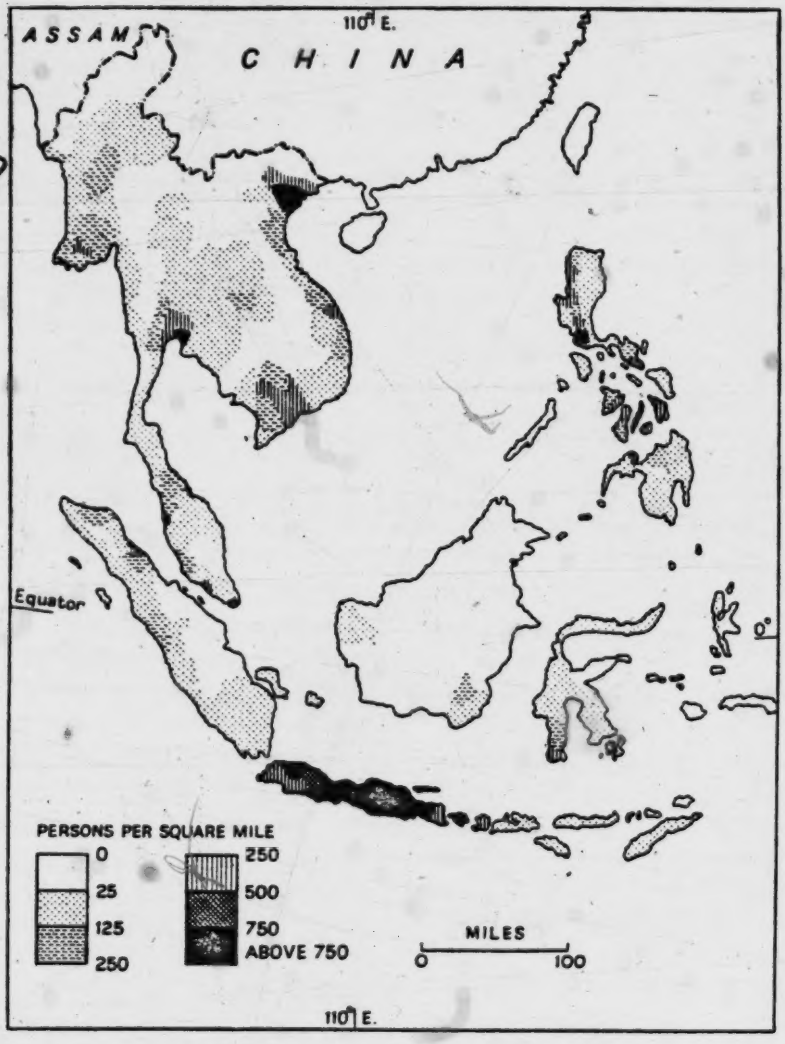

FIG. 116.—Distribution of People in Southeast Asia

rapid increase in people to a point where the new agricultural development ceased to be enough for the large population, leading to the second stage of slow migration and emphasis on commercial agriculture upon newer zones of similar type. Hence the change of emphasis from Tonkin to the Annam coastal plains and then to the Lower Mekong; from the Central Luzon area to Visayan Islands;

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from the plains of Java to the dangerous upper limits of the volcanic country; and from Dry Burma to the Irrawaddy Delta. Sometimes there has been a little agricultural migration—very largely this change has been brought about by different rates of growth rather than movement of people to new places. Everywhere commercialisation of agriculture has led to population increase, because the agricultural technique has not changed from the Southeast Asia tradition of manual work at every stage. The bringing of new areas into cultivation has been followed by an increase in the number of hands to do the cultivating, partly a response to the need and partly made possible by additional nourishment and an added vitality arising from lower disease rates natural to the less populated area, because human diseases are diffused more slowly where people are isolated from one another, as in new areas. Thus Southeast Asia has been the scene of intense pioneering by people seeking, developing and filling new agricultural areas, to create for a time the eldorado of rice-eating peoples and the one safeguard of Indians and Chinese against the vagaries of their own harvests and against the congestions of their home districts.

Minerals in turn have attracted external interest. There has been the pull of gold in the Philippines, of tin in Malaya and nearby islands, of petroleum in Sumatra and Borneo. These great gambles drew capital and pulled in crowds of labourers, wage-earners who were unavailable from local people so tightly held in their manual agricultural systems. Minerals drew millions of Chinese through the South China Sea in the tin rushes and oil rushes of the last hundred years.

Yet another form of commercialised agriculture developed, to provide the industrial raw materials of distant factories in Europe and America and based on crops entirely foreign to Southeast Asia. Sugar, coffee, hemp, rubber, oil palm proved highly successful in this terrain where they had never existed before. Large plantations of them were laid out, still more wage-earning labour was absorbed, a still greater production was obtained, drawing more and more people into virgin areas. Migrations from India and China were further stimulated to work upon the plantations whose uneven development, in successions of booms and depressions, alternately attracted migrants in the boom years and sent them home again in the depressions.

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Political Convergence

438 These local products for commerce not only stimulated export trade; they stimulated import trades to feed the migrant peoples, to dress them, and to dress the agriculturists so preoccupied that they could no longer spare time to weave for themselves. And trade itself drew external interests; Chinese and Indian traders came in to monopolise middleman functions and Europeans came in and worked out here the complex balancing of their own industrial systems far away. Britain stimulated the commercialisation of Burmese rice production as an assurance of cheap food for an industrialising, overpopulated India. The Dutch fanned out from Java into the adjoining islands. Not to be outdone, the French moved into Indochina as a base for their China trade. Germans for a time controlled the copra trade of the farther eastern islands. Thus all the major Western European powers had colonial interests in the expanding peoples, the expanding production and the expanding needs of Southeast Asia. And the major oriental powers, India, China and Japan, had equally direct interest in Southeast Asia (Fig. 117) as an outlet for their people, a source of rice, a source of raw materials for their industries, and finally as outlet for their own industrial products, India and Japan being mostly involved in this, the latest phase.

Internal Divergences

The resulting pattern of people is one of unparalleled diversity in stages of evolution from subsistence to commerce, in densities of people, in ethnic types, in languages (Fig. 118). The similarity of setting, circumstance and products have disrupted Southeast Asia within itself by economic rivalry in producing similar commodities, and the divergencies of overseas connections with different colonial powers established divergent trade streams, currency differences, educational differences and political differences. Political and economic forces released in Europe and America had their repercussion within Southeast Asia, by means of which French protectionist policies virtually isolated Indochina from its neighbours and Filipinos turned their backs upon Asia. Siam has been wooed, ignored or bullied, depending on the fluctuation of Anglo-French relations in Europe and the opportunism of the U.S. in building up its bloc in East Asia. All sorts of colonial systems have been

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Exchange and Market; a capitalist structure, with the business concern as subject, far more typical of Capitalism than one can imagine in the so-called "capitalist lands" which have grown slowly out of the past and are still bound to it by a hundred roots'. He was writing with special reference to the European element, but his remarks apply with equal force to the Chinese element, and to the growing number of natives 'who have adopted a western mentality as their own, and who possess and use those qualities which modern capitalism requires of its representatives'.[1] Dr Boeke and other Dutch economists tend to contrast this rationalist material attitude of western enterprise with the disregard of economic values that they regard as characteristic of the native element. That will need further consideration; here it will suffice to note that during the present century, up to the depression of the thirties, the foreign elements were growing more numerous and more powerful, and that political reforms did nothing to check this process. On these points Netherlands India resembles Burma; what is distinctive of the social order in Netherlands India is that, for good or ill, the native community has largely been cut off from and protected against the working of economic forces, which in other tropical regions, as in Burma, have been allowed free play.

13. Netherlands India and Burma

In the foregoing pages we have tried to bring out some of the more important points of similarity and contrast between Java and Burma. In both there has been rapid progress; both countries have been thrown freely open to the modern world under the policy of the 'open door', and both now make a valuable contribution to the material resources of the world. In both alike the process of development under foreign rule has resulted in a racially mixed community in which economic forces are abnormally active, and in both a nationalist movement voices a reaction against foreign rule.

We have seen, however, that in the principles and machinery of administration a superficial resemblance conceals a profound difference. British rule in Burma rests on the principles of economic freedom and equality before the law, and there is a single uniform system of direct rule in which the administrative officers are essentially servants of the law. Dutch rule in Java rests on the principle of 'like over like', and there is a dual administration

[1] Boeke, cited *Netherlands India*, pp. 452, 457.

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of their value by example and experience. Apathy betokens the failure of welfare measures, and the resort to compulsion is not only a sign but a confession of their failure. When measures that would really promote welfare fail, the explanation must be sought in some defect in the machinery of welfare, and as we have seen, this is defective because it works mechanically in response to the will of Government and not as an expression of organic social will. Compulsion can, within limits, be exercised effectively in the interest of economic progress, but to raise the standard of living among people in general it is necessary to organize a demand for welfare. Where an effective majority demands welfare measures, compulsion by penal regulations will give strength to their demand; beyond that, except so far as such measures are needed for the health of Europeans or the efficiency of western enterprise, attempts to promote welfare by compulsion almost certainly do more harm than good.

6. The Relation between Progress and Welfare

Indirect rule as we have noticed, although originally adopted for convenience, has been justified as a means of softening the impact of Europe on the tropics by leaving the people under their own rulers, laws and customs, and thereby moderating the pace of change so that they can adapt themselves to their new environment. Indirect rule does, in fact, provide machinery which should enhance welfare, and we may find cases where it has been effective. But the machinery often fails because the motive principle is unsound; it is applied to further progress rather than welfare. The growing tenderness towards legal compulsion under a penal correction is a tacit confession that, even under the stimulus of gentle pressure, adjustment fails to keep pace with the ever-increasing rate of change. Despite aspirations to moderate the rate of change in the interest of human welfare, there is constant pressure to hasten it for the sake of economic progress. 'A striking feature of most European economic enterprise in Africa has been the constant effort of Governments, companies and individuals to achieve specific developments in particular directions as rapidly as possible.'[1] That is true of modern colonial expansion in general. Governments are expected to bring new territories to a state of financial independence as soon as may be; the numerous departmental heads call for reports on this, that and the other sub-

[1] Frankel, p. 10.

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ject, and officials in charge of a district for only a few months must act quickly if they are to do anything and show results; shareholders in private enterprise look for quick returns. 'Means, speedy means', is the motto of tropical development in all its aspects.

The rapid development of tropical resources is not only profitable to the colonial power but helps to justify its position under the 'dual mandate' to the outer world. At the first international conference on colonial affairs held at Berlin in 1884–5, the development of dependencies was laid down as a condition on which their tenure should receive international recognition. The modern world demands access to backward regions, and the pace at which their resources, human and material, are made available for world welfare steadily grows faster. Before the days of steam, the funds derived from the taxation of native enterprise were sufficient to meet the charges of development. With the construction of railways and the growth of western enterprise, the demand for speedier development compelled dependencies to raise loans from or through the colonial power. Now this also is regarded as too slow, and there is general agreement that colonial powers should expedite development by loans free of interest or by outright gifts. The Dutch contribution of f. 40 million to Netherlands India in 1904, for promoting irrigation, emigration and agricultural credit services, was regarded as exceptional and as justified by special circumstances.[1] So likewise was a recent contribution of f. 25 million. But in British colonial policy the grant of financial assistance to dependencies found acceptance as a matter of principle. This is the basis of the Colonial Development Act of 1929, supplemented and extended by the Colonial Development and Welfare Act of 1940.

It is not without significance that, in the title of this Act, development precedes welfare, and that aviation has been recognized as one of the objects having a prior claim on the funds which it provides. Air services have proved useful for the conveyance to Europe of gold and diamonds. They may in future contribute to economy in administration by allowing the concentration of the forces maintained for preserving order, and by reducing the time required for the journeys of officers on furlough, but hitherto the demand for air transport for civil purposes has come from a comparatively small group among the European community.[2] The issue is primarily between transport by air and by sea, but ranged on either side are all those who stand to profit by these

[1] *Netherlands India*, p. 236.

[2] *African Survey*, pp. 1602–3.

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• 178 respective forms of transport. Even before the present war, a situation was arising which called for measures to prevent wasteful competition between air and rail. It is not improbable that the powerful and vocal interests pressing for air services will obtain for them an undue share of the funds available for economic development, but doubtless all the rival interests will finally reach some form of agreement. Yet whatever agreement may be reached, one thing is certain: that the provision of air services will not 'moderate the pace of change'; on the contrary it will hasten economic development and increase the urgency of social services to mitigate its consequences. Already the subsidy to air transport constitutes a relatively heavy charge on the revenue in some territories, thereby diminishing the funds available for welfare services, and one may assume that, in the conflict of rival interests, the grant of funds for aviation (so far as it is not affected by lobbying) will be determined on purely economic grounds, and that the natives, who are least powerful and least vocal, will not have much influence on the decision.

Although the Act provides for expenditure on welfare services, it is based on the assumption that economic development is a condition of welfare. 'It can hardly be anticipated', says Sir Alan Pim, 'that the taxpayers of the Colonial Powers will, after the war, consent to such an annual levy on them as would meet the colonial needs either free of interest or at a nominal rate.'[1] Although additional expenditure on the development of dependencies does, or should, make them more profitable, it is doubtful how far grants or cheap loans for the purpose of development would benefit the British taxpayer. On the other hand, they would expedite the pace of change, and thereby enhance the difficulty of natives in adjusting themselves to their new environment. Grants made in the name of welfare will have a similar effect. However much may be available from public revenue or private charity for expenditure on social services, its effect on promoting welfare is conditioned by the demand for welfare, which in tropical dependencies, as we have seen, is effective only so far as welfare is necessary to development. Development creates a demand for social services, for the protection of land and labour, for the improvement of health and the multiplication of schools; but these services are transformed from instruments of welfare into instruments of progress. It is not true, as Liberals held, that development is a cause of welfare or, as modern colonial policy holds, a condition of

[1] *Colonial Review*, Sept. 1944, p. 203.

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welfare. On the contrary, welfare is a condition of economic progress, and has economic progress as a by-product. We have noticed a striking instance of this principle in Burma, where the people wanted to decorate the local pagoda with electric light. Their interest was primarily in religion and, without any help or subsidy from Government, they illuminated the pagoda. But, incidentally, they also provided electric lighting for the town. It is a matter of general experience that many, probably most, utilitarian reforms have originally been conceived as humanitarian ideals and, indeed, so far as our western civilization has a Christian origin, we may claim that it is based securely on the rock of vision.

Everywhere in the tropics there is abundant scope and need for the enhancement of welfare. But, as Lord Hailey has remarked, little can be done to promote welfare until the people themselves, or at least their leaders, are conscious of their needs.[1] Economic progress under western rule should provide the means for enhancing welfare, but we cannot enhance welfare merely through economic progress. The problem of enhancing welfare has some analogies with the problem of encouraging scientific research. Sir Joseph Thomson made some wise remarks on this matter in connection with the use of Röntgen rays in war. Administrations and employers want research in applied science that will give practical results, and the scientists whom they employ are expected to show results and, indirectly at least, are paid according to results. Research in applied science, starting to find an improved method of locating bullet wounds might, he suggested, have led to the invention of better probes; but the improvement of war surgery was mainly due to the apparently quite useless, unpractical research that led to the discovery of Röntgen rays. He drew the moral that 'research in applied science leads to reform, research in pure science leads to revolutions'.[2] For the enhancement of welfare in the tropics nothing less than such a revolutionary change in our attack upon the problem will suffice. One cannot achieve it by attempting to mitigate the consequences of economic progress. It is necessary both to organize a positive demand for welfare and to control economic development in the interest of welfare. We must go outside the domain of economics to find some dynamic principle, stronger than economic forces, which all accept as of superior validity to the desire of gain. But if we are looking for some principle of welfare, we should have a clear understanding of what we mean by welfare.

[1] *African Survey*, p. 1206. [2] Rayleigh, Lord, *Life of Sir J. J. Thomson* (1942), p. 199.

7: Janlekha X-4,5 (1948-1953)1956 AO7 Central Thai
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development who fear that these countries might not be able to expand their production faster than population expands, in which case the result of economic development efforts will be a greater quantity of people with little or no gains in the quality of living conditions. In Zinkin's words, "The growth of population and the impact of the West have between them, in the last hundred years, so upset the delicate balance that most of the Asian countryside is now bankrupt . . . . The alarming feature of the peasant economy of Asia is not simply that it is desparately poor. It is that in recent decades, and in most countries of Asia, it has been growing poorer. It is a changing, dynamic economy. But it has been changing for the worse."[23]

Poverty is not new in Southeast Asia. What is new is the awareness of poverty and the conviction that something can be done about it. "A great change", reported Harold Butler, "is stirring Eastern society. The consciousness of misery has been created by the growing realization that it is not the inescapable lot of the poor and that chances of better life now exist."[24] All of the countries in Southeast Asia have within the past decade set up official agencies charged with planning and promoting economic development; and for international assistance to hasten it, is the constant

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23. Zinkin, op. cit., p. 34.

24. Harold Butler, Problems of Industry in the East (Geneva: International Labor Office, 1938, Studies and Reports, Series B, No. 29), pp. 65-66.

10: Thompson S-4 (no date)1947 ALl Southeast Asia ALl

Chinese
Indians

464 years of the present century, the flow of immigration has been large and
167 comparatively steady except during the depression and the two world wars. Chinese and Indian immigrants usually could better their position soon after arrival because their industry and organization were superior to those of the indigenous peoples. Partly because of this, there were constantly new arrivals willing to do coolie work until they too could
• [178] rise economically. Except for the large-scale repatriations to China and India caused by the depression, the flow of labor thus set into motion was adequate for the economy prevailing in the underpopulated areas until changing conditions created a growing class of landless proletariat and
[668] dissatisfaction among both the indigenous and immigrant peoples. This dissatisfaction often became associated with other motivations in nationalist movements.

Controlled migrations occurred only between regions under the same government or those held by governments of the same nationality, except for a limited migration of Javanese labor to Malaya (and to New Caledonia). In the Netherlands Indies and in Indochina the governments endeavored to transplant groups of laborers from overpopulated to underpopulated areas, but in so doing they learned that the process required careful organization, was expensive, and raised serious economic, social, and psychological problems. Such movements could be effected successfully on a limited scale only. This fact obviated the possibility of their contributing substantially to solution of the problem of overpopulation. As labor supply, such migrations were only temporarily satisfactory, because social and religious ties inclined the workers to return to their home villages immediately upon the expiration of their contracts or even to desert. To stabilize this labor force some of the governments tried after the depression to obtain a better adjusted sex ratio in the migrant population by encouraging the immigration of workers' families and the establishment of agricultural villages—a program too recently initiated to make possible a definite appraisal of its comparative success or failure. In Malaya, with the exception of a few Javanese, planned immigration was confined to Indian laborers. It was arranged and operated jointly by the two British governments concerned. There, however, the depression, the growth in voluntary Indian immigration, and India's ban in 1938 on assisted emigration to Malaya tended to render many of the official controls unnecessary. The unplanned and uncontrolled movement of labor across the Burma-India frontier was the sole migration of its type in Southeast Asia.

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563 The indigenous populations in general hold themselves socially aloof
609 from the alien Asiatics. To the Muslim Malays the Chinese were materialistic, pork-eating idolators; and the Indians, with the exception of the small Islamic minority, were similarly disdained, though regarded as less aggressive. To the sinicized Annamites, the Burmese, and the Siamese,

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religion was no barrier between themselves and the Chinese; all were Buddhists, though of differing sects. Chinese culture had long been admired by the peoples of Farther India, and had influenced them. Moreover, the Chinese were regarded as distant and desirable relatives. With the advent, however, of Chinese women and the accelerated growth of Chinese nationalism after the first world war, intermarriage occurred less frequently (though it continued to be common in Burma and Cambodia), and the indigenous peoples had few social contacts with the Chinese in their midst. The cleavage between the ethnic groups was further widened in the British colonies by the official policy of representation of various communities on legislative and advisory bodies.

Economically, relations between the indigenous and the immigrant peoples altered from a mosaic of non-conflicting occupations to one of rapidly increasing competition. For years the native peoples had contentedly seen the arrival of thousands of immigrants annually who were able and willing to perform the hard labor for which they themselves had neither inclination nor compulsion. Through much of the region, however, during the inter-war period an indigenous proletariat was developing as a result of the transfer of farm land from the indebted native peasantry to non-agriculturists, often to alien moneylenders, and also because of the growth of a Western-inspired individualism which was weakening family ties once paramount. The trend was apparent chiefly in parts of Burma, Siam, and Indochina.

This development did not assume significant proportions until the world economic depression, when considerable unemployment arose out of the drop in prices and the curtailment of foreign markets for products of Southeast Asia. The result was a swift increase in the number of natives seeking to return to their villages and, on the other hand, of those forced to seek part-time or full-time employment away from their villages in competition with immigrant laborers for work previously scorned as arduous, monotonous, and underpaid.

Meanwhile the native middle classes for the first time faced a serious unemployment problem. Until the depression years, the opportunities for desirable though moderately paid employment in government or business had seemed to exceed the number of qualified candidates. The depression made it clear that the saturation point had been reached, and each year an increasing number of educated youths would be thwarted in their expectation of employment or, if given a job, in their rise to higher positions. Thus two groups of economically frustrated natives developed simultaneously in numbers and in consciousness in the decade prior to the second world war.

Nascent political factors became significant during that period. The struggles of the Chinese against the Japanese and of Indians against British rule were reflected in the attitudes of the emigrants from those coun-

Burma, Rangoon; in Thailand, Bangkok; in the Philippines, Manila; and in Malaya, Singapore. In Indochina, however, there are two major core regions, each with its regional capital, but Saigon is clearly dominant over Hanoi, which for reasons of population size alone must be regarded as a lesser city.[6] In Indonesia densely populated Java has two large cities, Jakarta and Surabaya, the first only twice the size of the second, but Jakarta is the Primate City, if less clearly than Bangkok or Rangoon. In each case, other than Indonesia, the Primate City is from five to ten times as large as the next largest city, and there is no such graded hierarchy of urbanization as in the United States and to a considerable degree in Western European countries and Japan. Secondary cities, such as Mandalay in Burma, Makassar and Jogjakarta in Indonesia, and Cebu in the Philippines, tend to be regional capitals subordinate to a great metropolis.

The rapid population growth of the six greatest metropolitan centers—Rangoon, Bangkok, Saigon, Manila, Singapore, and Jakarta—suggest that national urbanization may be proceeding as rapidly in Southeast Asia as in any other part of the world.[7] This may be true, but it can be argued also that the overwhelming dominance of the Primate City inhibits the growth of lesser cities and that the largest cities will expand more rapidly than the lesser ones.[8] There are in effect only a limited number of services to be performed by cities within a predominantly village and folk society, although it may be industrializing slowly, and the great cities continue to possess a virtual monopoly of these services. Thus, even as a society changes, new and increasingly complex functions tend to be performed by institutions

[6] According to the *Annuaire statistique du Vietnam, 1949–50*, the population of Hanoi was 216,900 in 1950. Its port, Haiphong, had a population of 146,000. The total population of the two is only about one-fifth that of the twin cities of Saigon-Cholon.

[7] Between 1939 and 1948 the population of Greater Manila increased by 55 per cent. Between 1931 and 1947 the population of Singapore Town (now City) increased by 52.5 per cent.

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178 already established in the Primate cities. So, to a very large degree, in Southeast Asia growth is primarily in the great cities,[9] whereas in the United States in the last three decades at least growth has been more rapid in the small and intermediate cities.

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Although the rates of urbanization are high, being, in the case of the Philippines nearly twice the rate of population growth,[10] no sudden transformation to an urbanized society can be envisaged. The percentage of total population classified as urban is in general so low and the normal rates of population increase so high that the growth of urban population *as a percentage of total population* has not been spectacular. In the Philippines, for example, the urban population increased merely from 23.3 per cent in 1939 to 24.1 per cent in 1948, largely in the Manila area. The apparent positive correlation between social change and rates of urban population growth also is exceptionally high. To illustrate with a negative example, in Thailand, where recent social change has been minimal, the rapid population growth of Bangkok has been equaled and even exceeded by that of a number of rural *changwats* in the central and southeastern parts of the country. Under at least two conditions, however, the great cities have increased their populations enormously and at shocking rates: (1) where enlarged political functions have been acquired since the war and (2) where rural unrest and insecurity have

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[9] The only apparent major exception to this generalization is Singapore and Malaya, where the lesser towns have tended to increase their populations equally rapidly since 1931. This situation may be explained by the special political and economic status of Singapore, the entrepôt for much of archipelagic Southeast Asia, and the exceptional degree of commercialization in the Malayan economy as a whole (see M. V. del Tufo, *A Report on the 1947 Census of Population [Malaya, Comprising the Federation of Malaya and the Colony of Singapore]* [London, 1949]).

[9] E.g., Greater Manila accounted for 89 per cent of the 1939–48 growth of the seven largest cities in the Philippines.

[10] Between 1939 and 1948 the approximate rate of total population growth was 20 per cent; that of urban population growth, nearly 40 per cent.

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178 caused or hastened a flight to the relative security of the city. These forces have been 162 operating in combination particularly in 369 Rangoon, Jakarta, Saigon, and Manila and largely are responsible for their extremely 361 rapid postwar growth. Lesser cities in Java, for example, such as Surabaya, Jogjakarta, Semarang, and Surakarta, also have increased in population because of rural insecurity; and in Burma in several towns and cities up to 50 per cent of the population has been resident less than four years, for the same reasons. These migrations have not, however, necessarily been accompanied by greater employment opportunities and consequently cannot be regarded as indexes of more rapid urbanization and associated socioeconomic change.

184 The great cities of Southeast Asia possess many features in common, not the least of 361 which is their youth. This quality they share also with several of the great cities of the 369 United States, but there the resemblance ceases.[11] In 1800 Rangoon, Saigon, and 175 Singapore did not yet exist in city form; 178 Bangkok, the new capital of Thailand, was less than twenty years old; Manila and Batavia (Jakarta), though then about two hundred years old, were merely small coastal towns. They began to grow rapidly after the middle of the nineteenth century, as a consequence of the development of the treaty ports in China, the opening of Japan, the transfer of power from the East India Company to the British Crown by the Queen's Proclamation of 1858, the opening of the

[11] For the most part the growth of the Southeast Asian cities was not associated with a total transformation of society but with a strong indigenous tradition, as in the case of Bangkok, or with the juxtaposition of a segment of a new civilization alongside the old, as in the case of Rangoon. In America the cities represented the culmination of a social transformation in a virtually unoccupied frontier region. The same is true of Manchuria, the northeastern frontier of pioneer settlement in China, which is more recently, and more highly, urbanized than any other part of China. In Manchuria, as in the United States, there is a quite regular gradation of city sizes, and the Primate City cannot be clearly identified.

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Suez Canal in 1869, and the consolidation of Western control, direct or indirect, over most of Southeast Asia in the 1890's, followed by American acquisition of the Philippines at the turn of the century.

More important, the great cities were, and to a large degree still are, foreign creations, essentially alien to the Southeast Asian landscape. Although several began as native settlements, they developed as foreign exclaves on the margins of Asia, in much the same way as did the plantation system and mining operations. With the exception of Bangkok, they represented and functioned as the overseas appendages of Western, not indigenous, interests, being what Spate has called "head-links"—the gates by which Western concepts entered to destroy and build and in which a new system of economic organization evolved.[12] Indeed, the concept of the Asian plural society was inspired by the contrast between the basically foreign great city and the indigenous agricultural village. The ties of the great city with its hinterland were primarily commercial and associated with foreign-controlled mining and plantation interests and with Chinese-dominated rice trade. Such direct political-administrative ties as did exist were restricted primarily to indigenous elites, small in number, which allied themselves with Western interests. Where the indigenous rural populations were affected by these urban-rural relations, it was primarily through the plantation or the mining system, both of which needed a large labor force, or through Indian or Chinese intermediaries.

On the other hand, the relations between an indigenous capital, like Bangkok in its earlier period, or Kyoto or Peking, and the agrarian society upon which it was based were of quite a different order. In these cases the capital represented the culmination of what might be termed a national *ethos*, the epitome of what Redfield has

[12] O. H. K. Spate, "Factors in the Development of Capital Cities," *Geographical Review*, October, 1942, p. 628.

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Bang Kok

behind them is one of the most striking demonstrations of cultural dualism in Southeast Asia.

Unlike the other great cities, Bangkok originated as the capital of a land-oriented agrarian state. Its proximity to tidewater was accidental. In 1822 the ship bearing the Crawfurd mission to the Thai court barely was able to cross the bar at the mouth of the Menam, then covered by only four feet of water.[2] Its poor harbor and its remoteness from the major shipping routes of the South China Sea conspired to retard the development of the city as a port until the end of the nineteenth century and to retain it as an anachronism in Southeast Asia—a growing city, nearly great, surely primate, but indigenous rather than Western. Nevertheless, since it was through Bangkok that Western influences filtered into Thailand, it is a case of an indigenous capital acting as a revolutionary medium for socioeconomic change.

Bangkok is still the least convenient port of the great cities in Southeast Asia. The bar across the mouth of the Chao Phya was dredged through only in 1952, and port facilities are modest as compared with the other cities. Indeed, most vessels still anchor in the Bight of Bangkok in the lee of the island, Kao Hsi Kang, at the mouth of the Chao Phya and transship their cargoes to and from river barges and country boats which link the island with Bangkok. Surprisingly, the freight tonnage handled at Bangkok is about one-third that of Singapore, although the volume of shipping is only one-tenth as large. The explanation lies partly in the large bulk shipments of rice which form the main export. Partly, also, there is a lower load factor at Singapore, since much of the shipping which enters its harbor is as much dependent on the local complex of service facilities as on cargo potential. At Bangkok, peripheral as it is to the main trade routes, few vessels call without assurances of sizable cargoes.

[2] See J. Crawfurd, *Journal of an Embassy from the Governor-General of India to the Courts of Siam and Cochin China* (London: H. Colburn & R. Bentley, 1830).

On the other hand, changes in transportation have elevated Bangkok to a new importance. It lies astride the main air route between Europe and the Far East, and the Australia-Europe services also pass through it. It is now the leading international air center in Southeast Asia, with 42 international departures a week in 1953 as compared with Singapore's 27, and its airport is one of the larger commercial fields in the Orient.[1]

The role of the Southeast Asian great city has been modified by the Pacific war and the granting of independence to Burma, the Philippines, and Indonesia, and partial independence to Vietnam. Five of the six great cities are now capitals of the independent states. Each of these merits the title "link capital"; that is, they are the media through which the newly independent states are linked with the outside world. At the same time, they have begun to assume an increasingly indigenous character. The substitution of Malay for Dutch names and street signs in Indonesia is only one evidence of cultural change. The in-migration of petty officials, tradesmen, and refugees from the beleaguered rural areas has given the urban populations a new and more homogeneous native cast. The fevers of nationalism have made the large minorities more cautious about flaunting their ethnic independence.

[1] [i.e. as compared to the inconvenient port facilities -- Analyst]

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361 On the other hand, the war also brought in-
178 creased American influence into the region,
631 and the ubiquitous Coca-Cola sign is one of
184 the symbols of change that sooner or later
162 will be followed by changes in urban facili-
563 ties and urban organization.
171 More important, the present period is as-
369 sociated with an increasing intensification of the economic activities of government and a corresponding diminution of foreign enterprise. Political and administrative functions have become increasingly important since the war. Since the main governmental organs are concentrated in the largest centers, the direct influence of the great city upon the country in which it is primate is likewise increasing. Relations between nationalized city and an increasingly money-oriented countryside are becoming more intimate, and the formerly clear-cut cultural distinctiveness of city and country is rapidly becoming blurred. Therefore, the likelihood of the great city's leading a revival of ancient value systems, as some extreme ethnocentrists hope it will, is small. Only one prediction can be made: the days of the culturally alien and ethnically distinct urban center are numbered in Southeast Asia; and a city like Singapore becomes increasingly an anomalous relict of an age now past.

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Chinese

427 But the alien planta-
565 tions and even alien smallholders have threatened to grasp at it, and the
177 advances of Western medicine, so beneficial in many ways, have only accelerated the rate of increase of the population which has to seek a livelihood from it. In most parts of South East Asia the peasant is the actual owner of the land he tills, often legally under some agreement with
426 the State. But his rights to the produce are often severely limited by a heavy burden of indebtedness. The real effects of this may be less than people sometimes think, because when the debts are spread among neighbours and kinsfolk interest may be waived, repayment is sometimes protracted or ignored, and the debt may be serviced by other than material means. But there is no doubt that the peasant producer is badly hampered by his debt load. It is most pressing when debt is contracted to a member of an alien ethnic group, an Indian or a Chinese, for whom the transaction is a purely commercial one.

563 The role of alien Asiatic ethnic groups is one of the most significant
565 features in the economic and political life of the peasantry of South East
177 Asia today. For many centuries, Indian and Chinese trading influences
178 have met in the South East Asian region, and Indian religious concepts
439 have penetrated deep into many of its social systems. But for more than four hundred years the dominant commercial and political note has tended to be sounded by Europeans. Now the balance is altering. Colonialism may have set the modern structure of South East Asian society, but the patterns will persist when the colonial Powers have withdrawn. To this new society the Chinese above all have the economic key. In Indo-China, Siam, Malaya, the Philippines, and Java, the Chinese have penetrated the economic system and taken over crucial functions. They have shared in much of the wholesale import trade, they have attained pre-eminence in retailing vital imported goods to the peasant, and they act as middlemen for the collection, storage, and processing of peasant export products. As part of this process they often finance the peasant producer by advances on his crop, gaining a double profit by giving part of these advances in goods, not cash. The Chinese achievement has been remarkable. They have been kept on the margin both of the peasant society with which they deal, and of the European society with which at a later stage their growing wealth would allow them to associate. Though lacking any formal political power, which in the Orient as elsewhere is so often the passport to success, they have built up a trading structure of extraordinary toughness, elasticity, and elaboration.

565 The wider political implications of this are not my concern here. But
609 it is important to note three points in connexion with the peasant theme.
186 One is the xenophobic reaction of the local urban dwellers and of peasants
578 too, which has periodically found expression against the Chinese, as traders or residents in South East Asia, in the form of riots and other disturbances.
563 Another is the reaction of the Chinese, whose economic strength has given
241 them confidence, and who are now prepared to stand by their claim to a